

Religion, Modernity and Globalisation: Revisiting the Paradigms of Fukuyama and Huntington

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Abstract: This paper examines the treatment of religion in the analytic paradigms of Francis Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington. I argue that neither offers a satisfactory account of the role of religion in today's globalised world: Fukuyama because his account relegates religion to the private sphere and marginalises it in his post-historical world, and Huntington because his thesis exalts religion to an unduly deterministic and particularist status, rendering his paradigm unable to account for global events where non-cultural factors are also important. In the final section, I offer some preliminary thoughts on how a reconciliation may take place between the widely perceived Western nature of modernisation, and the religious and cultural traditions of the non-Western world.

Keywords: religion, modernisation, globalisation, Francis Fukuyama, Samuel Huntington